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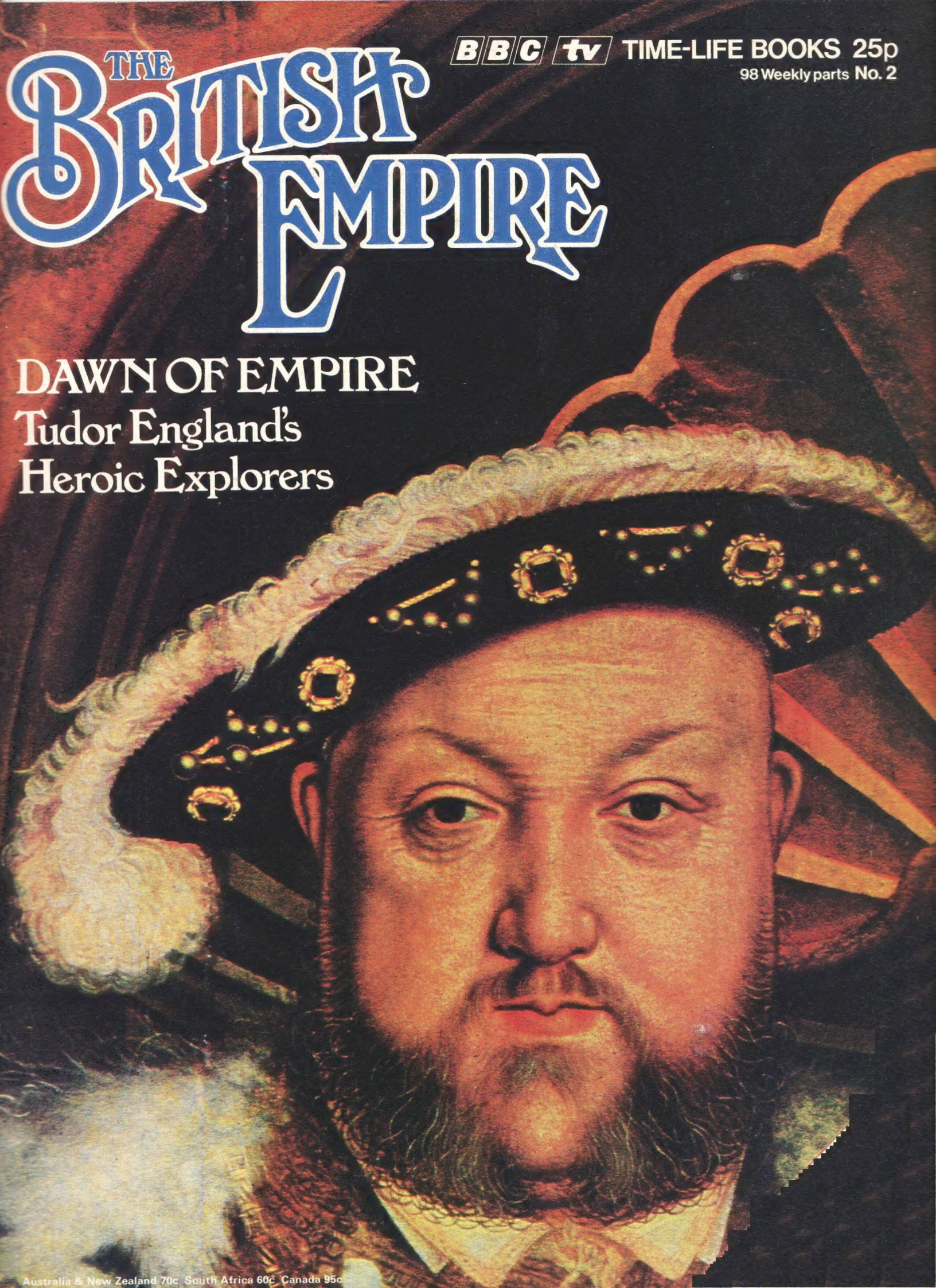
98 Weekly parts No. 2

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

DAWN OF EMPIRE
Tudor England's Heroic Explorers



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Issue No. 3: Showdown with Spain. Expansion-minded England was a threat to Spain. When Spain's Armada came, Britain won her most legendary victory.

Issue No. 4: Black Ivory. Under this macabre nickname, millions of black Africans were sold into slavery in the New World. This issue tells of Britain's profitable role in the grisly trade.

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Cover: Henry VIII, whose powerful aggressive features are shown on this week's issue, established England's independence from Catholic Spain and Rome.

These tokens are valuable see inside back cover.

DAWN OF EMPIRE

This title-page of a Tudor-period nautical manual evokes the adventurous spirit of the age.

In 1533 it was solemnly decreed "with the consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal and the Commons" that "this realm of England is an Empire."

By today's standards, the assertion was extraordinarily optimistic: Scotland remained untamed, Wales was not yet annexed, control of Ireland was almost non-existent and, except for Calais, the Crown could claim no overseas possessions.

But the writers of the statute were in no way concerned by lack of world dominion, for they had another meaning of Empire in mind: Henry VIII's decision to declare the kingdom independent of the Pope and, by extension, of all foreign domination.

Moreover, Henry's statute-makers possessed in their characters elements essential for the achievement of world Empire: optimism, aggressiveness, self-confidence. Understandably so: Henry's parsimonious father had set the economy to rights, founded a navy and curbed the power of his nobles. Now, prosperous, ambitious landed gentry and merchants stood ready to finance overseas enterprise.

The foundations for expansion were secure, and remained so through Henry's break with Rome. Within a generation, Elizabeth's adventurers were to set about building a finer Empire than Henry could ever have imagined

By Lacey Baldwin Smith

"Whosoever commands the sea commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself." The formula was first voiced by Sir Walter Raleigh but it had been fully understood by Spanish and Portuguese mariners long before the visionary Elizabethan poet-cum-adventurer sought to captivate his countrymen with the dream of world Empire. Englishmen were latecomers to the sea that lapped their island kingdom. Iberian merchants, not London shopkeepers, had first responded to the three historic voyages by Columbus, da Gama and Magellan that between 1492 and 1519 revolutionized men's minds and changed their ideas about the earth, geographically enlarging its circumference by 5,000 miles and revealing the New World of the Americas. The "green sea of darkness" which had been western Europe's prison was transformed into a high-road for expansion, and the seaports of the Atlantic became windows to the Far East as shipwright and navigator set about testing what the poets had dreamed of: a sea-route to Cathay – as China was known – and its fabled wealth, described by Marco Polo two centuries before.

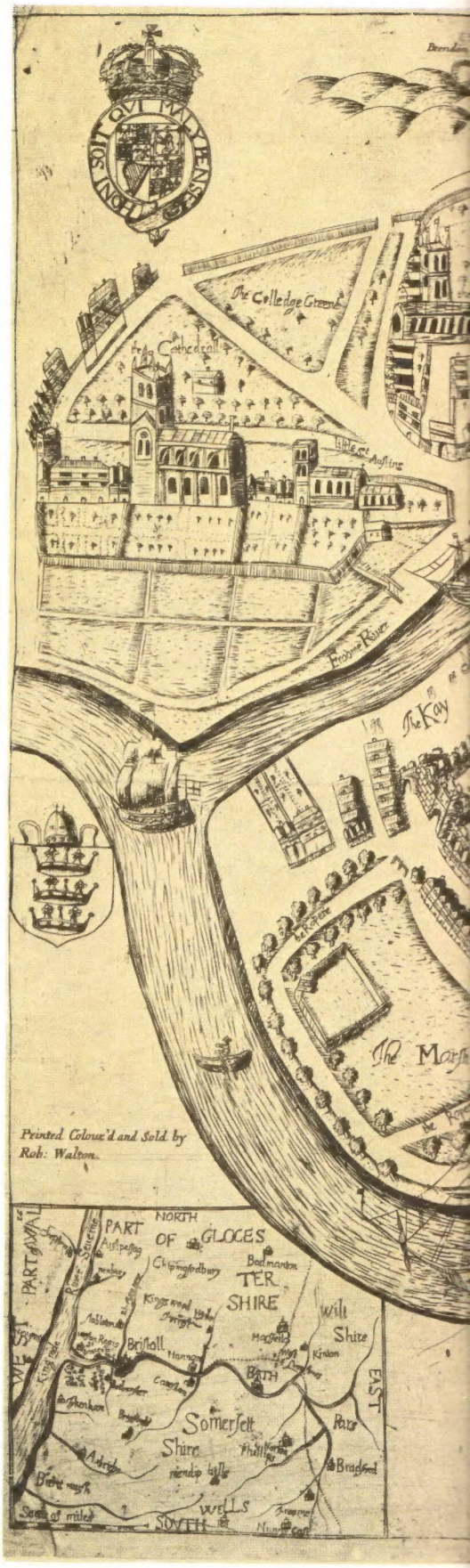
But the New World, rich in gold and politically ripe for the picking, which thrust itself between the Iberian harbours and the wealth of the East Indies proved to be a greater attraction than the legendary Ming Treasury. Spain and Portugal proceeded to carve up the newly discovered lands between them.

Once started, Iberian expansion, heavily fortified by technological superiority in ships, guns and political organization, could not be stemmed. Within a decade Portugal had turned the Indian Ocean into a private lake and the Malabar coast into a closed trading preserve. Territorial expansion took Spain slightly longer. Not until the 1540s was the New World safe for commercial and cultural exploitation by Seville merchants and Andalusian priests, but from the start both kingdoms perceived the magnitude of their discoveries and called upon an obliging Deity to safeguard their economic monopoly and sanction their military conquests.

In 1494 His Holiness the Pope was persuaded in the Treaty of Tordesillas to exercise his divine mandate and apportion the world between those most Catholic sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain and John II of Portugal on a line 1,000 miles west of the Azores. To the Iberian, it was obvious that the Lord, considerably aided by Albuquerque, Balboa, Cortés, Pizarro and the other *conquistadores*, had always intended that neither the New World nor the South-West Passage to Cathay should be plagued by Northerners, be they English, French or Dutch. Spaniards and Portuguese calmly accepted that the profits of world empire belonged to them – "so Catholic, so firm, so true."

Until the mid-16th Century, the Spanish and Portuguese seemed to have nothing to fear from the British, at least. For they, in the words of the great historian of exploration, Richard Hakluyt, were traditionally known "for their sluggish security," a people who, despite their insular location, were strangely blind to the wonders of the deep. The lure of the nautical unknown, of the pot of gold to be found just over the horizon, which persuaded Spaniards by the thousand to undertake their hazardous voyages, exercised no such magic in the North.

The one man in England who was caught up in the dream of discovery was not even a native, but a Venetian merchant who had settled in Bristol. In 1497, two months before da Gama set out on the journey that took him from Lisbon to Calicut, John Cabot sailed west in search of the lands of the Dragon Throne. What he found was the barren rock-ribbed coast of Cape Breton Island, off the coast of Canada. In three more voyages his record was no better: unfriendly sightings of Greenland, Labrador, Newfoundland and New England, a wild-cat and a brace of



Sebastian Cabot, who like his father John searched in vain for a North-West Passage to China, popularized the benefits that would flow from exploration.

Bristol's 10,000 inhabitants won for their westward-looking city a unique reputation as a proud and thrusting seaport – a reputation much enhanced in the 16th Century by explorers like the Cabots who used the port as a base.

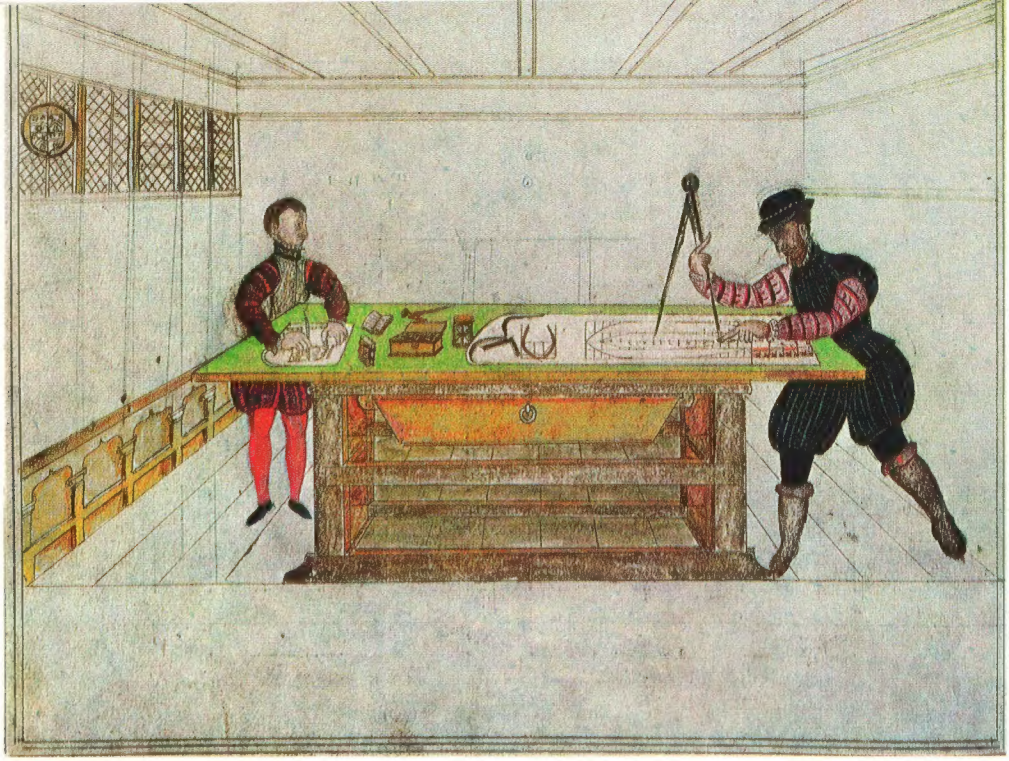
barbaric Eskimos brought back to London as curiosities; but no Asia and no civilization rich in gold and spices. Only an oddity proved significant. Off the Newfoundland Banks was discovered a portion of the sea where the fish were so plentiful that they could be pulled in by the basketful, without net or hook. Henry VII had commissioned Cabot's first voyage, but the only official document that remains is the brief notation of £10 for "him that found the New Isle," and thenceforth Bristol merchants were content to concentrate on the safer and more profitable business of supervising their cloth exports to Antwerp, Calais and Cadiz.

On the surface it is surprising that Englishmen did not go down to the sea in ships, and that Columbus's recital of the wonders he had found – "the greatest event since the creation of the world" – did not fire the Anglo-Saxon mind. The island kingdom was more politically unified than Spain, was larger in population than Portugal, and early Tudor sovereigns were just as interested in ships and trade as John II of Portugal or Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. Henry VII possessed a highly developed appreciation for the importance of commerce, and his son was absorbed by shipbuilding and naval architecture.

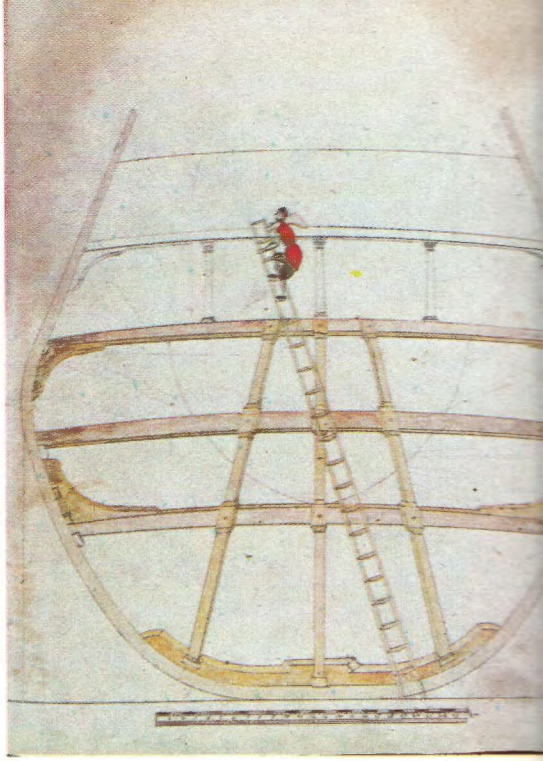
Henry VIII, like his father, was not unreceptive to the possibility of new markets for English wool, and during the 1520s he backed a number of abortive efforts to discover a North-West Passage which would bring China within reach of London merchants. Leadership, motive and economic means were all there, but except for a handful of dreamers, Englishmen were content to remain in their chimney-corners, and Robert Thorne's impassioned *Declaration* to Bluff King Hal was never heard: "With a small number of ships there may be discovered divers new lands . . . in which without doubt your Grace shall win perpetual glory and your subjects infinite profit."

There were plenty of seamen who doubted that the Deity had reserved the New World for Spain and Portugal. There were even a few who ardently believed that the North, its lands and

Henry VIII, obsessed with the need to strengthen British sea-power, built up a fleet of some 90 vessels and was himself an accomplished shipwright.



A Tudor shipwright, watched by an assistant, uses a pair of dividers to draw up plans for a vessel, perhaps in preparation for a critical scrutiny by the King himself.



In this sketch of a sturdy Tudor ship, a craftsman prepares to fix a deck-support.

its passage to the East, had been set aside by Divine Providence to be discovered by Englishmen; but time and circumstance were not yet right. The kingdom's political efforts during most of Henry VIII's reign were still directed towards the slaying of a medieval dragon – the conquest of the lost provinces of France. Economic energy remained landlocked in raising sheep, carding wool, weaving cloth and mining tin. European merchants beat a path to English ports; there was no need to search further afield for new markets or for English navigators to chart the currents of the Channel, let alone the Baltic or South Atlantic. Spiritual drive, at least for the time being, was also turned inward, as the King's matrimonial affairs dragged the realm into religious schism. Divine Providence had plenty to do in keeping the island safe for Protestantism without reserving the North-West Passage for English commercial penetration.

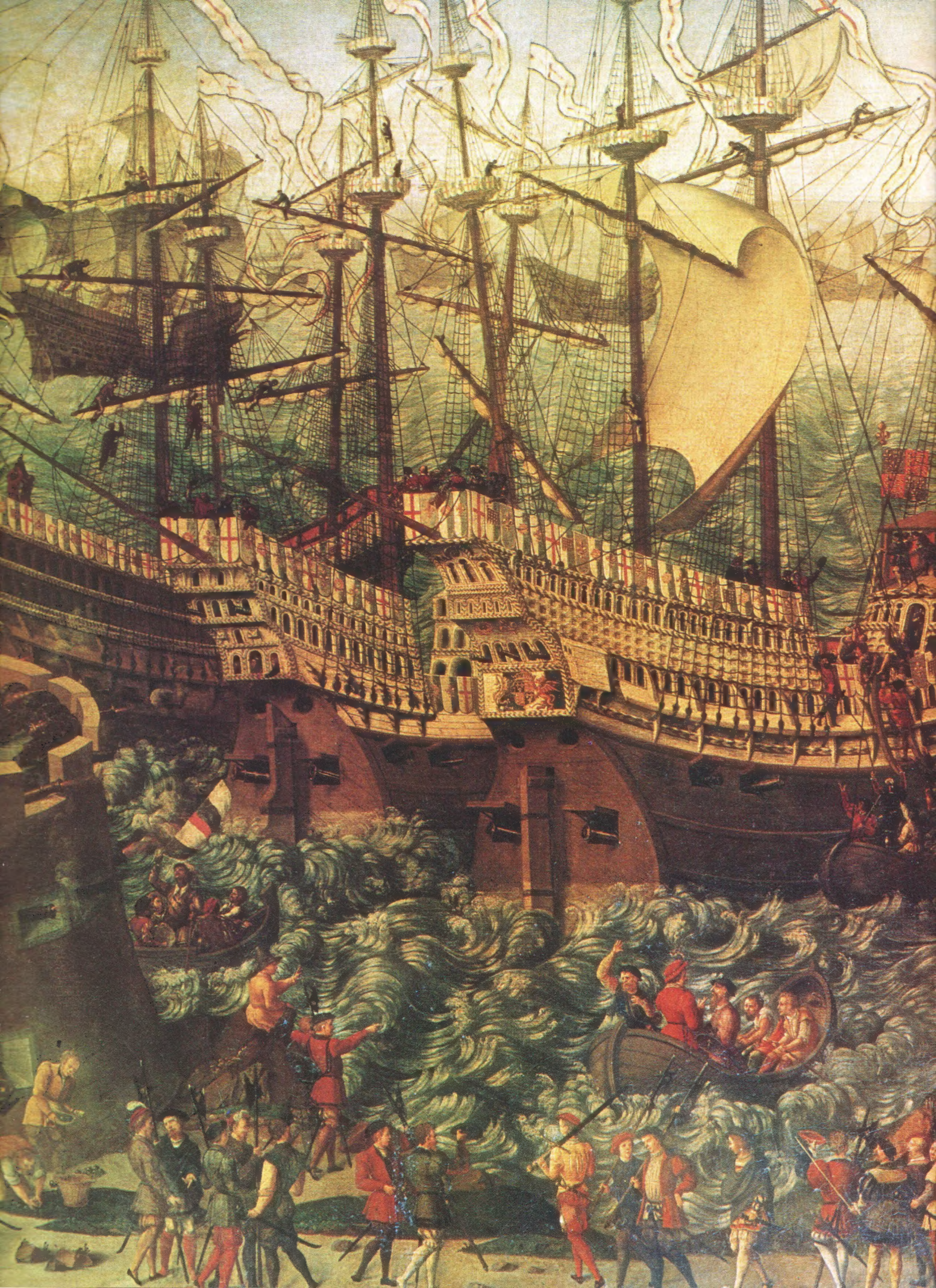
Within a generation, as the Elizabethan era took shape, apathy turned into unprecedented naval daring. Political, economic and religious dynamism coalesced and turned outward, producing a breed of adventurers just as ruthless, just as greedy, just as spiritually arrogant as any *conquistador*. In part the metamorphosis was simply the product of malice – why should Spain and Portugal harvest the riches of the East and West? In part it was an offshoot of Protestant zeal – surely the Lord had not intended the entire earth to be Catholic? In part it stemmed from the spectre of economic ruin as the wool trade moved from boom to bust; and in part the transformation was itself an hallucination, a marvellous affliction of the mind which turned the horrors of ocean travel into the romance of discovery. Whatever the explanation, it was not long before Elizabeth's brave seafarers were setting out "to seek new worlds, for gold, for praise, for glory."

The underlying emotional change is impossible to date; the economic inspiration, however, can be precisely isolated. In 1550 the English wool industry faced disaster as export figures fell by 35 per cent. Confronted with bulging warehouses and constricted by the privileges still retained by the continental traders of the moribund Hanseatic League, London merchants looked over the top of the world to the Orient, where even in the 16th Century it was argued that China's teeming millions would be England's economic salvation. As Hakluyt put it, "our chief desire is to find out ample vent of our woolen cloth, the natural commodity of this our Realm," and the fittest places were "the manifold islands of Japan and the northern parts of China. . . ."

The economic remedy was apparent; the proper path was not so easily discerned: some favouring the north-west, others the north-east route to Cathay. Beginning half a century before, the Cabots – both Sebastian and his father John – discovered on a series of voyages that took Sebastian as far north as Hudson Bay that the westward route consisted of endless miles of icy water and smothering fog. The experts, therefore, favoured the opposite direction: north into the Norwegian Sea, east round the North Cape of Norway into Barents Sea, and then, the geographers predicted, a warmer trip into temperate waters down the northern coast of China.

Realizing that no single individual had either the economic means to risk such a venture or the international prestige to impress the Celestial Court of China, London merchants in 1553 joined under royal patent to form a joint-stock company. Sebastian Cabot was elected first Governor and the new enterprise was given the optimistic name of the "Company of Merchant Adventurers of England for the Discovery of Lands Unknown."

"Unknown" was indeed the operative word, for instead of finding the Son of Heaven the explorers ran across Ivan the Terrible of Russia. Three vessels set out in May, 1553, under the command of Sir Hugh Willoughby with "the incomparable Richard Chancellor" as Chief Pilot, on an expedition possible only in theory and never before attempted except by Norwegian fishermen and hunters in search of game. Only Chancellor in the



Among the "Grete shyppes" of Henry VIII's navy, drawn up in dazzling array at Dover in 1520, was the 1,000-ton, 200-gun *Henri Grace à Dieu* or *Great Harry* (centre), the largest galleon of her day and pride of the King's expanding fleet.

QUEEN ELIZABETH was a shrewd businesswoman who for her country's sake encouraged British merchants in their efforts to establish markets overseas.

Edward Bonaventure returned. Sir Hugh and the crews of the *Good Hope* and the *Confidence* froze to death in the Arctic winter on the barren coast of Lapland. The *Bonaventure* had been luckier; despite freezing spray and screaming winds she made her way into the White Sea and the domain of the Tsar of all the Russias. Chancellor journeyed cross-country by sled to Moscow, where he was lavishly and drunkenly entertained by Ivan, and he reached an understanding with the Prince of Muscovy, who was as anxious as the English to circumvent the trade monopoly in the Baltic of the German Hanseatic League.

Richard Chancellor never lived to profit from his efforts – he was drowned when the *Bonaventure* was wrecked on its second return trip from Russia.

The search for a link with Cathay continued. The Company's agent, Anthony Jenkinson, journeyed in 1558–1559 from Moscow to the Caspian and thence worked his way to Bokhara, but the silk caravans which had trekked 3,000 miles to China in the days of Kublai Khan had long since ceased, and anarchy prevailed throughout Turkestan. Jenkinson headed next into Persia, reaching Derbent in 1562, where he hoped to establish a link with the Orient through Persian middlemen. Prospects of trade with the Far East proved disappointing, but London merchants were soon exchanging English woollens for ornate Persian carpets.

Frustrated by land, the Merchant Adventurers, who rapidly acquired the name of the "Muscovy Company," continued their search by sea. Stephen Borough in the *Searchthrift*, a tiny pinnace manned by a crew of eight, managed to push his way into the Kara Sea in quest of Cape Tabin, a promontory whose existence was predicted with certainty by Dr. John Dee – mathematician, geographer and unswerving believer in magic – but which always remained lost in the impenetrable fog and ice of the Arctic. If only Tabin could be rounded, then, according to the experts, the Siberian coast sloped south-east to China and the sailing would be easy. Borough's attempt was so harrowing that it was not until 1580 that Arthur Pet and Charles Jackman responded again to Dr. Dee's continued urging to challenge the Kara Sea. Pet made it back, but Jackman and all his crew disappeared without trace somewhere off the Norwegian coast.

If not north-east, then north-west; if Cape Tabin proved elusive in the Siberian cold, perhaps Cabot's Straits and the Broken Lands just north of Hudson Bay might prove more attainable, for they were well known "to such as have any skill in geography," especially the remarkable Dr. Dee. Moreover, the Muscovy Company's charter did not limit the prospects of "lands unknown" to the north-east; the Company had a monopoly in the west as well, and the desire to sell English cloth was insatiable.

The arguments were powerfully expressed by the adventurous but ill-starred Sir Humphrey Gilbert in an enthusiastic little book, *A Discourse of a Discovery for a New Passage to Cathaia*, originally written in 1566. He concluded: "that there lieth a great sea between it [America], Cathaia and Greenland, by the which any man of our country that will give the attempt may with small danger pass to Cathaia . . . in much shorter time than the Spaniard or Portugal."

With further stimulus provided by the ambitions of a rather unsavoury master-mariner and ex-pirate by the name of Martin Frobisher, three small ships, weighing only 60 tons in all, were fitted out to test Dr. Dee's theories that a link between the Atlantic and Pacific existed somewhere north of latitude 60°. On June 8, 1576, the *Gabriel*, the *Michael* and a ten-ton pinnace sailed past Greenwich Palace and headed north for the Greenland coast.

At first it appeared as if Frobisher would follow Chancellor to a watery grave, for the pinnace sank with all hands in a raging storm and the *Michael* conveyed itself "privily away" and ran for home, reporting that Frobisher in the *Gabriel* had been "cast away." The commander, however, was not so easily disposed of. He might have little understanding of the theories that had inspired his voyage, but a broken topmast and a leaking ship could not stop an old pirate from adding his name to the

Murad III, the weak, lecherous and obese Turkish Sultan, increased his already vast riches as Anglo-Turkish trade expanded.

Turkish merchants – in hats that amazed English traders – sold spices, dye and cloth in return for tin, mercury and amber.

ELIZABETA D. G. ANGLIÆ. FRANCIÆ. HIBERNIÆ. ET VERGINIÆ
REGINA CHRISTIANAE FIDEI VNICVM PROPVGNACVLVM

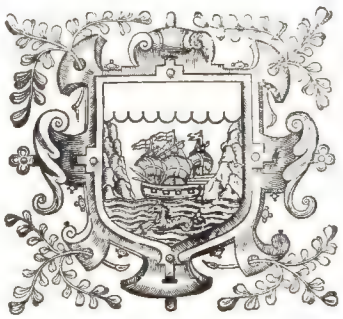
Immortalis honos Regum, cui non tulit ætas
Vlla prior, veniens nec feret vlla parem.

Quis ipsa tantum superant reliqua omnia regna,
Quantum tu maior Regibus es reliquis.

Ivan the Terrible of Russia, eager for Western contacts, threw a drunken banquet when the first British traders arrived.

Russian merchants like this one welcomed English commerce, for it helped to break the German monopoly of Baltic trade.

Merchants of Levant, or
Turkie Merchants.



The Merchants of Levant, whose coat of arms is shown here, monopolized the highly lucrative currant trade with Turkey.

Merchants of Ruſsia.

The Merchants of Russia, renamed the Muscovy Company in 1555, traded guns and cloth for fur, hemp and tallow.

Martin Frobisher's men (above) ward off attacking Eskimos on Baffin Island in 1577. Frobisher himself (right), a powerful, cantankerous Yorkshireman "who swore no small oaths," was so incensed when a lone Eskimo approached his ship that he leaned over the side, plucked both man and kayak out of the water and took his catch back to England.

growing geography of the day. He sailed on and discovered "Frobisher's Straits." The name had to be changed to "Frobisher's Bay" when it was discerned that the stretch of water led only to the interior of Baffin Island, but the Captain was convinced that he had succeeded in his mission. After all, the area was populated by a race of slant-eyed Mongolian people who seemed friendly, and certainly the climate was cold enough to warrant any number of English woollens.

And so Martin Frobisher returned to London with the good news of his discovery, one kidnapped native to prove his claim, and a small piece of black rock. Not everyone aboard the *Gabriel* had been so fortunate; five of the crew had placed too much faith in the friendliness of the shy and childish Eskimos and had been eaten for their confidence. The trip, however, was proclaimed a triumph, especially when it was rumoured that the bit of black rock was gold ore.

The next year merchant-shipowner Michael Lok and Frobisher had no trouble in raising money and the short-lived Company of Cathay was founded – not so much in the expectation that China was just over the north-western horizon as that gold was to be had in the Arctic regions. Even the Queen took the bait

and invested over £2,000 in two voyages which brought back 1,500 tons of rock, all of which turned out to be "fool's gold" and quartz. Elizabeth burnt her fingers; Lok ended up in debtor's prison; Frobisher was once again called a pirate and a rascal; and the fabled riches of Cathay remained as far away as ever.

Dreamers like the Cabots, vendors of black magic like Dr. Dee, and crude opportunists like Frobisher, all had been called by the North-West Passage and had been turned back by cold and ice. Now came the turn of a new type, the "scientific navigator." Mr. John Davis was the author of two books – *The World's Hydrographical Description*, a defence of the Passage, and *The Seaman's Secrets*, a handbook of navigation – and he was a leader and organizer of dedication and intellectual calibre.

His appearance on the oceanic scene was symptomatic of the fact that the energy and commitment which under the early Tudors had been directed towards the solution of domestic problems was now turned to the greater world without. Three generations earlier Englishmen had been novices in navigation – even as late as 1576 Martin Frobisher was sailing more by guts and good luck than by triangulation and exact compass bearings – but by 1580 Elizabethans were among the best sailors in the world and John Davis was in part responsible; he invented a quadrant which for the first time enabled mariners to locate their latitude with precision.

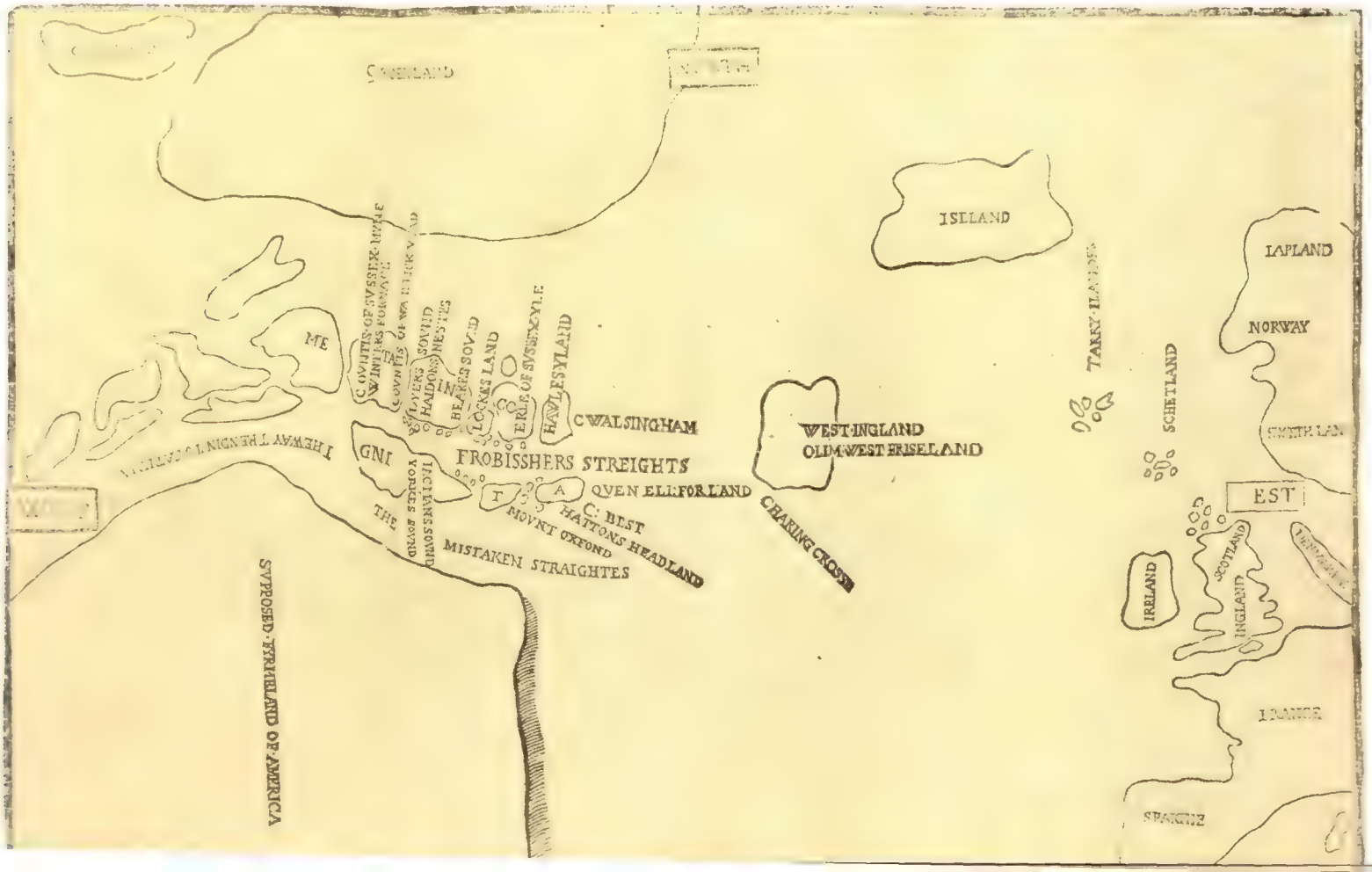
There were other symptoms, too, of the new outward urge in Davis's expedition. A century before, a great cloth magnate, Mr. Thomas Paycocke of Coggeshall, had donated the proceeds of his trade to found no more than a chantry to sing Masses for his commercial soul; now Mr. William Sanderson, of London, invested the profits of his fishmongering to buy Davis two fragile ships – the *Sunshine* and the *Moonshine* – to carry him over the top of the earth.

Once English Protestantism had been on the defensive; now the Queen's own Principal Secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, was urging Davis to "attempt that which God Himself hath appointed to be performed" – the spreading of the light of the Gospel into the Arctic unknown.

Three times, in 1585, 1586 and 1587, Davis sought to "see the end of this business," and he reached latitude 73° north, further than any Englishman had penetrated. He gave his name to Davis Strait and christened the northernmost point that he reached on the Greenland coast "Sanderson's Hope," but no matter how far he went, open water extended further northward. We know today that Cabot, Davis and Dee were correct in theory: the polar route runs from Baffin Bay into the Arctic Ocean and out again through the Bering Strait, but it takes an atomic submarine or a powerful ice-breaking oil-tanker to do it, not a 50-ton cockleshell.

Sanderson's hope was never realized. Though the East India Company sent George Waymouth in 1602 into Arctic waters just to be sure that the long southern route round the Cape of Good Hope was the only practical opening to the East, and eight years later Henry Hudson discovered at the cost of his life the true geography of Hudson Bay, the quest for Cathay in northern latitudes really ended with John Davis's third endeavour of 1587. There was no fourth or fifth trip; the very dynamism that had sent Davis to the top of the globe now prevented him from seeing the business finished, for England was headed for a showdown with Spain. The year of the Armada had arrived, and Raleigh's words – "whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the ... world itself" –

A contemporary chart illustrates the discoveries and assumptions made by Frobisher in his attempts to find the North-West Passage to China. But the optimistically named "Frobisshers Streights," far from leading to the Celestial Empire, was in fact a dead-end inlet into Baffin Island.



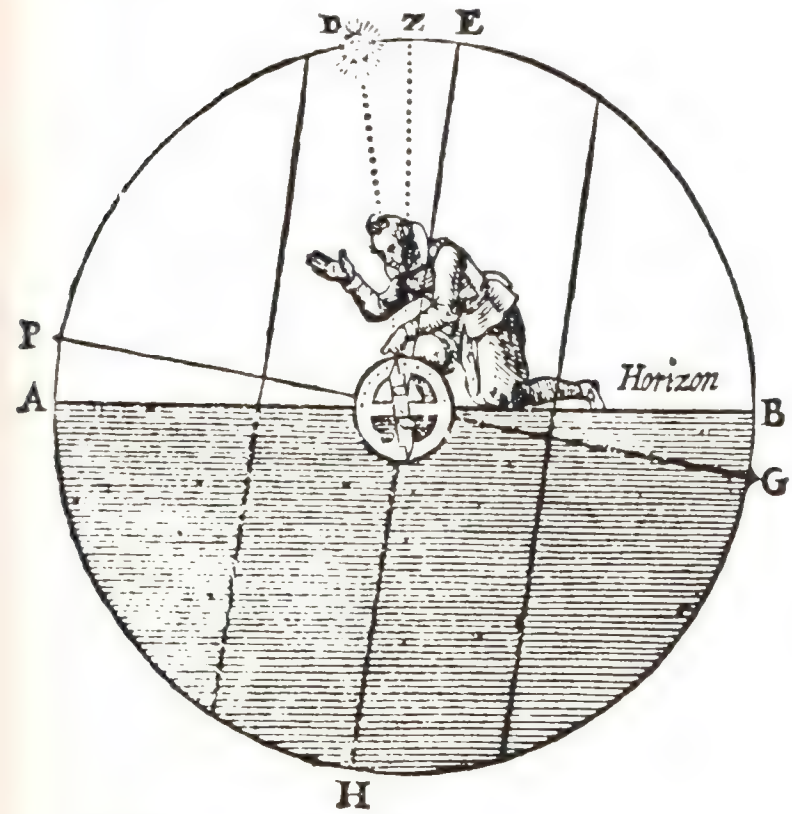
were being tested not in the north but south-west in the Caribbean and south-east in the Indian Ocean, where the riches of the China trade were to be tapped. These had become the focal points of English expansion, the next arena in which the Elizabethan heroes were to display their boundless energy.

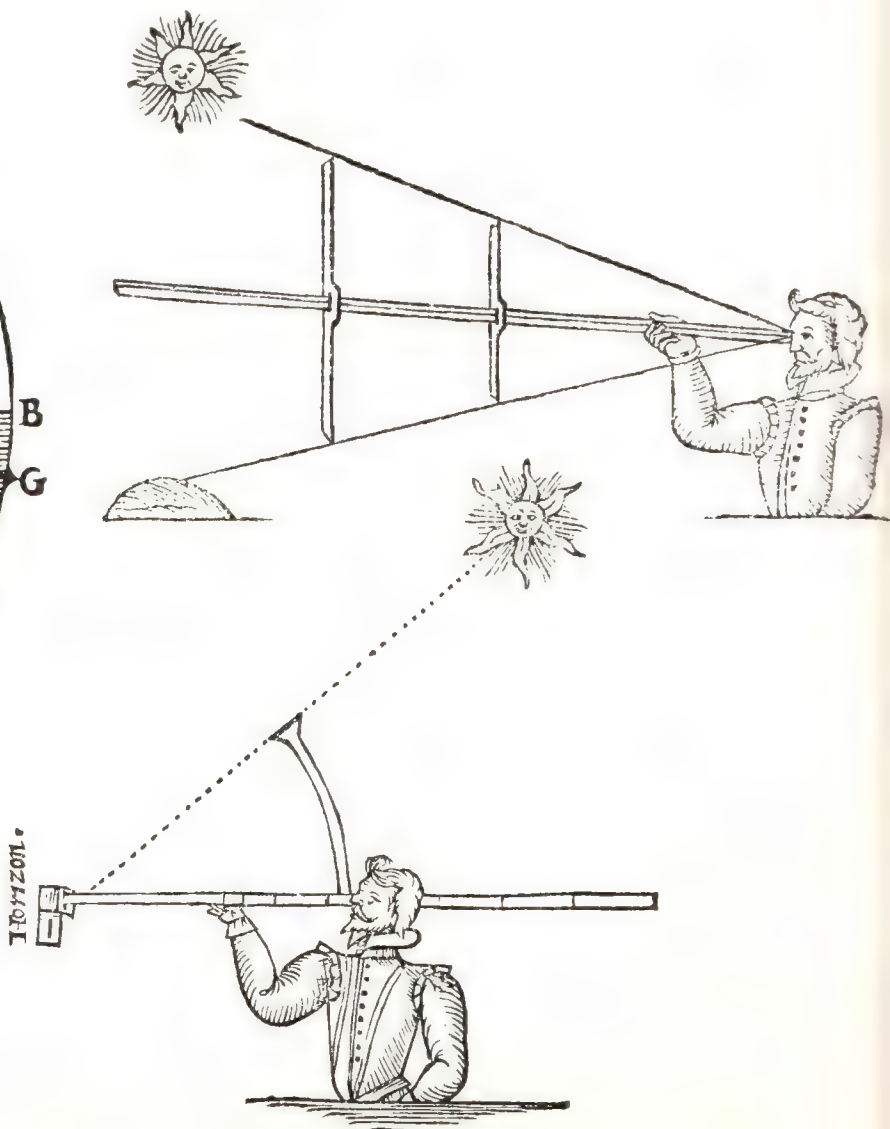
It was indeed an age of heroes, answering to none. One and all they were willing to "pay nature's debt with cheerful countenance," for they courted death and never feared it. Within their souls there burned an awe-inspiring sense of election, but these chosen few were no empty vessels filled with the spirit of the Lord. The dynamism that urged them on was devoid of heavenly reward or hellish punishment. They required of God only that He grant them the chance to show their true metal, forged in the fire of their egotism. The adventure of life, said Raleigh to his son, was "a troublesome bark," and it was up to each man to make good his "station in the upper deck; those that live under hatches are ordained to be drudges and slaves."

Whatever may be said against these heroes of Elizabethan England, they cannot be accused of dullness or slavishness. They spoke proudly and persistently of their duty to God and Queen, but Elizabeth knew that neither the threat of prison nor the fear of hell could discipline her warriors, and, in letter after letter, she was reduced to impotent rage and helpless pleading. Duty to themselves as a breed of men apart was the root and branch of their faith.

Such attitudes were part of the flavour and proportions of the age. Not only did Gilbert, Raleigh, Drake and the rest take themselves and their reputations seriously but so also did the world in which they lived. Drake's ruddy and belligerent features and tub-like frame hung in the portrait galleries of innumerable Protestant princes throughout Germany and Holland; the daredevil death at the age of 32 of Sir Philip Sidney, who rode into battle without his steel cuisse because his wounded commander was unable to wear armour, was held up as an act of daring and renown becoming a great poet; and Marlowe spoke for his generation when he wrote of the dreadful Tamburlaine that his honour consisted "in shedding blood."

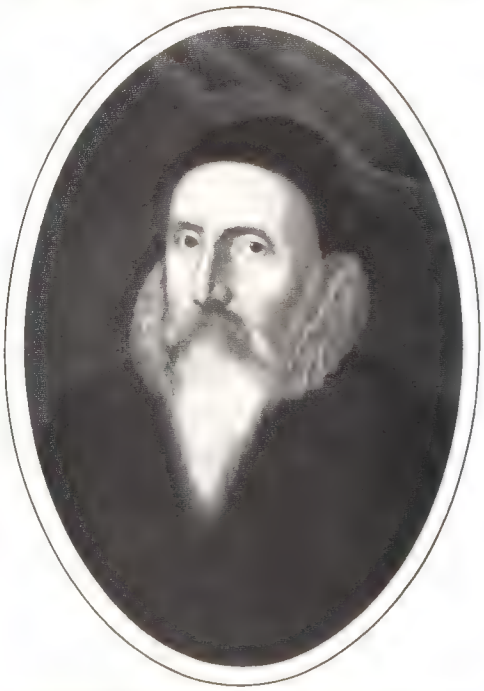
The heroes of the 16th Century were no deities fulfilling their boisterous destinies in Olympian isolation, nor were they exceptions to the Tudor rule; they were simply magnified examples of it. Individually their actions are grotesque, but placed within the context of an age where exaggeration and violence were the central characteristics of life, their feats become no more extraordinary than that of the indefatigable Robert Carey, who won a £2,000 bet by walking from London to Berwick in 12 days, or that of the unnamed English soldier whose arm was shot off by a cannon-ball at the siege of Ostend. Nothing daunted, the young man picked up the severed limb, returned with it to camp and announced to his comrades: "Behold the arm which but at dinner helped its fellow." The 16th Century, as did the 18th, believed in





With the astrolabe, cross-staff and back-staff, all of which measured the angle between the noontide sun and the horizon, Tudor navigators had fairly accurate means of finding their latitude – their position north or south of the Equator.

The Diabolical Doctor Dee



At 40, mathematician and sorcerer John Dee already looked like an aged wizard.

Among the founders of the British Empire, none was more bizarre than the brilliant Welsh intellectual, John Dee. Mathematician and sorcerer, astronomer and alchemist, geographer and astrologer, he was acknowledged as England's greatest authority on the mathematics of navigation, introduced the cross-staff from Europe (see left, below) and inspired generations of grizzled navigators to roll back the frontiers of the known world.

He was held in great esteem by such sea-dogs as Drake, Davis and Frobisher, who eagerly sought his advice and hungrily devoured his output of maps, technical handbooks and navigational essays. But Dee's geography was essentially speculative. He was a firm believer in the fabled southern continent which was said to lie in the Pacific to counter-balance the weight of the northern land-masses, and staunchly supported the theory that there was a navigable North-East Passage to China.

The Doctor was, however, more than theorist and scientist: he also had a credulous faith in the powers of alchemy and sorcery. For years he struggled to transform base metals into gold and discover the elixir of life. He firmly believed he could use "impious and damnable magick" to conjure infernal spirits who would impart all knowledge and power. Many, indeed, thought that, like Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, Dee had made a pact with the Devil in return for the services of demons.

Elizabeth, like most of her countrymen, took such powers seriously: she appointed him Royal Adviser on Mystic Secrets and loved to visit him in his Thames-side house at Mortlake to discuss astrology.

Tragically, his contributions to English expansion were soon forgotten and he died in abject poverty, aged 81, still mesmerized by the gobbledegook of medieval "science." Yet in one way, he was the greatest visionary of Tudor England: long before it became a reality, he was talking confidently about a "British Empire" and hustling off navigators to claim it.

"bottom," the untranslatable word which united stoicism with enthusiasm, histrionics with conviction, and foppery with toughness.

Their feats should be placed within the context of an age where exaggeration and violence were the central characteristics of life. Imagine life as it actually was – a long agony of itches from skin diseases, lice and fleas, a steady procession of toothaches, gout, stones, rheumatism and pains, and the constant fear of smallpox, sweating sickness and the plague. Only the strong of body and stout of heart survived, and even they could not long withstand medical practices designed more to test the patient's fortitude than to cure his sickness. The surgeon's saw without ether, the barber's tooth-extractor without novocaine, and the physician's potions without understanding, were no less terrible than Spanish musket and cannon shot.

Men wore a tough hide of inhumanity and callousness that inured them to the sight of blind beggars trying to club a pig to death, or to the agonies of the condemned prisoner writhing in a pot of boiling oil, of the witch suffering on the stake, and of the traitor strung up on the gallows and then, still living, cut down, castrated and disembowelled.

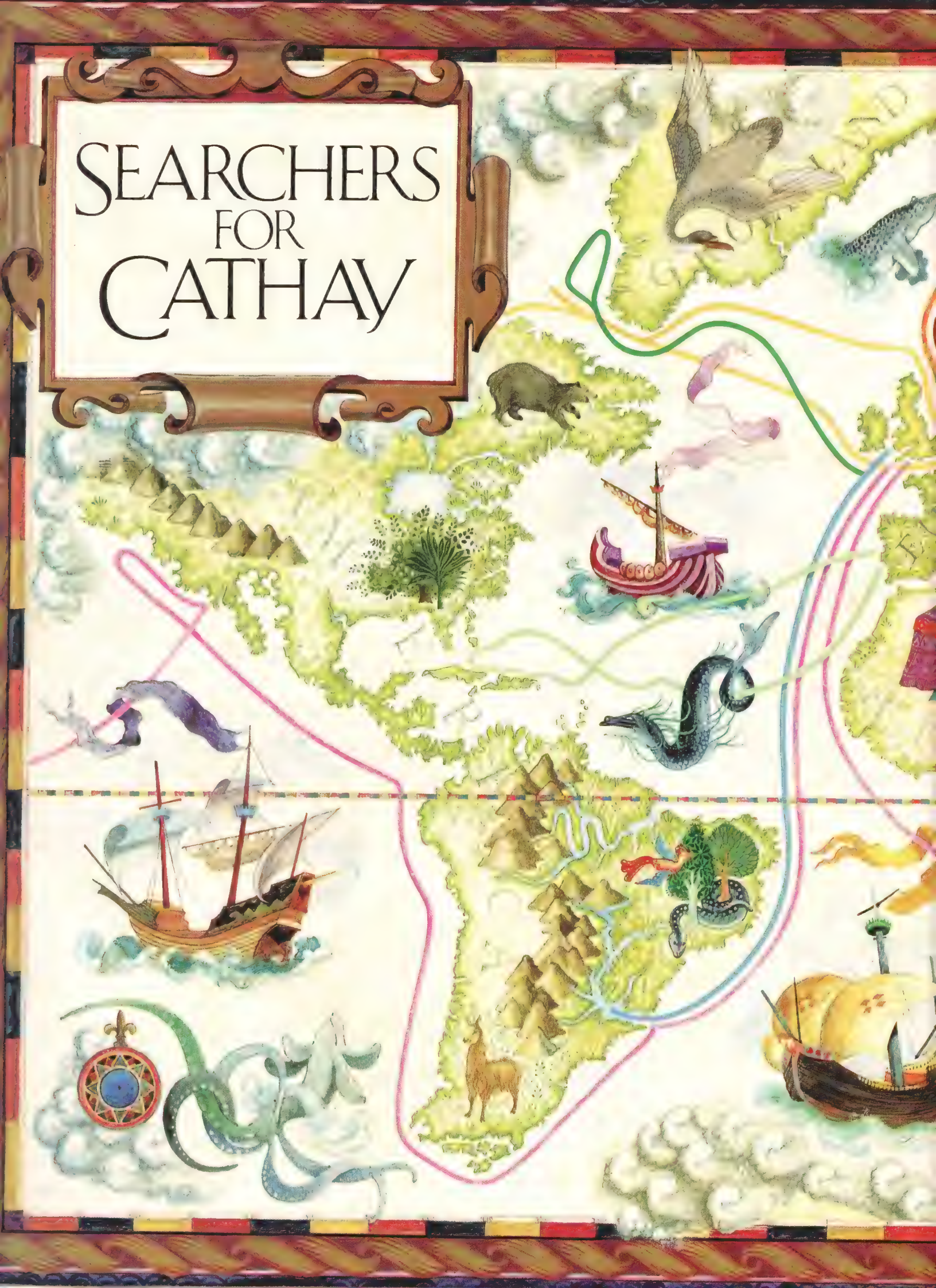
This callousness was often reflected in the behaviour of the Elizabethan hero-adventurers. The picture of Sir Francis Drake sitting cross-legged on a sea-chest and enjoying himself hugely while lecturing his delinquent chaplain, who was chained and collared to the deck in front of him, is an example of ruthlessness and egotism unforgivable even in a demigod.

The unfortunate Francis Fletcher had spoken disrespectfully and ill-advisedly of his Captain and had intimated that the misfortunes of the *Golden Hind* had come as retribution for Drake's execution of one Thomas Doughty for witchery and disobedience. Sir Francis's simple Puritan soul was outraged by this fearful evidence that Satan had entered even into the heart of a minister of God, and calling his crew together he addressed the frightened and humiliated clergyman: "Francis Fletcher, I do here excommunicate thee out of the Church of God and from all benefits and graces thereof, and I denounce thee to the devil and all his angels."

In judging Drake's sadistic satisfaction, it is well to remember that cruelty gave spice to life.

Man's fate on earth was boredom, pain and death, and those who endured it demanded the chance to enjoy life vicariously. They thrilled at Raleigh's boast that England would make the kings of Spain "kings of figs and oranges, as in old times" for such words lent verisimilitude to their dreams. Gilded youths with "fierce dragons' spleens," wearing a lord's revenue on their backs, and buccaneers who were mindful only of the vainglory of life must have been irritating beyond measure – to the merchant immersed in his accounts, to the bureaucrat insensible of romance, and to a Queen who counted her change and constantly inquired into the cost of glory. The 16th Century, however, forgave them because they were great, never more so than when they challenged the unknown for the sake of fame and, they fondly hoped, wealth

SEARCHERS FOR CATHAY



After Columbus discovered America in 1492 the British set out to discover worlds of their own. Some of their fruitless attempts to find the northern routes to China – Cathay as they called it – are charted on this specially commissioned map. Also shown is Drake's voyage round the world which finally revealed the real route to the Far East.
Christopher Columbus to the Bahamas, 1492–93
Sebastian Cabot to the River Plate, 1526
Richard Chancellor to Russia, 1553
Anthony Jenkinson to central Asia, 1558
Martin Frobisher to Greenland, 1577
John Davis to Greenland, 1585
Francis Drake's circumnavigation, 1577–80
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II. The New World and Beyond

While the Muscovy Company's sailors fought their way to a standstill in the Arctic wastes, others tackled different routes to the East with more success: overland through the Middle East, south-east round the Cape of Good Hope and south-west round Cape Horn.

Of all the voyages which at this time jolted England out of her insularity, Sir Francis Drake's epic and piratical circumnavigation of the globe via the Horn was the most awe-inspiring. Drake's achievement, even more than the victory over the Armada, produced the marvellous confidence that led Raleigh to exclaim: "What shall we be, travellers or tinkers? conquerors or novices?"; and it clearly demonstrated that the oceans were no longer closed Iberian preserves but open to all strong enough to sail them.

The expedition was pure magic. It began on December 13, 1577, and lasted nearly three years. On September 6, 1578, Captain Francis Drake in the *Golden Hind* sailed out of the windswept Straits of Magellan, headed up the South American coast "liberating" the treasures of Spain as he went, travelled as far north as British Columbia in search of the entrance to the North-West Passage, doubled back to California and on June 17, 1579, took formal possession of the shores of San Francisco Bay for his Queen. Four months later he was in the Philippines, and on November 3 he anchored off the most valuable real estate in the world, the spice islands of the Moluccas where the precious clove grew. Soon the indefatigable Captain was delighting the Sultan of Ternate with Elizabethan music and had persuaded him to place the entire spice trade in English hands.

The *Golden Hind* took on a cargo of six tons of cloves, which were fetching five shillings a pound on the European market, and 11 months and a shipwreck later, Drake sailed into Plymouth Harbour. It was not the New Albion of California which impressed Elizabeth when Drake finally arrived home but those East Indian cloves, and when she rewarded her Captain with a silver goblet, she had the cup engraved with a picture of Sir Francis being received by the Sultan of Ternate. At last an Englishman had tapped the treasures of the Indies and approached Cathay.

Drake's favourite goblet, a gift from the Queen to commemorate his round-the-world voyage, is in the form of a globe, hinged in the middle, topped by a celestial sphere.

The Pacific route proved to be an eternity. The passage through the Straits of Magellan alone was a desperate feat. Edward Fenton in 1582 never made it, Thomas Cavendish in 1586 took 49 days on his first endeavour and gave up entirely on his second, and Richard Hawkins in 1593 managed the trip in 46 days. At every step of the way there was danger – storm, mutiny, shipwreck and Spanish reprisal. Thomas Cavendish disappeared at sea; John Davis crept back with 16 of an original crew of 67; Richard Hawkins spent eight years in a Spanish jail; and from John Childley's and Andrew Myrick's ill-starred efforts only four Englishmen out of 300 returned home. But Drake, even after he had jettisoned half the cargo to save his ship, had made a 4,700 per cent profit, which was more than enough to blind anyone to the horrors of the Horn.

The second alternative to the northern path to the Orient – by way of the eastern Mediterranean – was the oldest and shortest tie between East and West but tortuous beyond description. Chinese silk and East Indian spices were gathered at the thriving Indian ports on the Malabar coast; thence they were carried in clumsy ocean-going *baghlas* to the entrance of the Persian Gulf and reshipped by frail coastal vessels to Basra, where the precious cargo was again unloaded and transported by camel caravan to Aleppo and finally to the port of Tripoli. From the bazaars of the Levant they found their way via Italian middlemen to every city of Europe. The risks were incalculable but such was the value of the cloves and nutmeg, silks and sandalwood that a handsome profit was realized if only one shipment in six got through.

During the 1570s London merchants had turned to the Levant as the only practical link with the Orient since Iberian naval power still dominated the ocean-routes. Special trading rights were secured from the Turkish Sultan by time-honoured means: egregious flattery and the gift of a mechanical clock of extraordinary ingenuity. By 1579 the Levant Company was in business. Despite Muslim

piracy and Spanish naval guns in the Mediterranean, it was soon a thriving financial success.

Elizabethans, as usual, were greedy and not content with a transhipment trade in which the real profits went to Turkish and Venetian entrepreneurs, and in 1583 John Newberry and five colleagues journeyed from Aleppo to Baghdad and Basra in an effort to trade directly with the Orient. From Basra, Newberry and three others sailed on to India where, after adventures which belong more to *The Arabian Nights* than to real life, three of the travellers found themselves at the Court of the great Akbar to whom they presented the ornate and wordy greetings of their Queen. William Leeds, an expert in fine jewels, was induced to remain at Agra; Ralph Fitch headed further east into the Ganges delta, trading the whole way; and Newberry, convinced that only a sea-route round the Cape of Good Hope could successfully tap the riches of India, started home to report his findings, only to vanish somewhere in the barren expanse of central Asia. Fitch kept going, studying commercial possibilities in Siam and Burma, spying on Portuguese trading posts in the East Indies and eventually retracing his steps to Basra and finally Aleppo. He returned home in April, 1591, after eight years of wandering to discover his estates probated and a memorial service long since offered for his perambulating soul.

Only one other sea-link to China existed and that was almost as dangerous as the Straits of Magellan. The passage south round the Cape of Good Hope meant a three-month journey before the first landfall, after which most available watering-points were controlled by the Portuguese. But following the triumph over the Armada, Elizabethans were keen to try. The Dutch were already setting the pace, plundering Portuguese merchantmen as they sailed from Goa and Malacca for Lisbon. No one in England could forget the riches of the *San Felipe*, a vast East Indian carrack taken by Drake in 1587 and valued at £108,000, or the *Madre de Dios* worth £140,000, or all the other 1,000-ton carracks which the Portuguese used to solve the logistical problem of carrying enough supplies to round the Cape.

In 1602, a Portuguese carrack was captured by British East India Company and Dutch vessels – a success which strengthened the Company's resolve to break into the East Indies trade.

Sir Francis Drake's menacing gaze hints at the gritty, blunt personality concealed, in this portrait of him at 42, beneath the constraining ruffs of courtly dress.

The first English expedition set sail in April, 1591 – the month Ralph Fitch returned to life. Humanly, financially and commercially the voyage was a fiasco, a sad log of mutiny, shipwreck, piracy, Portuguese attacks, marooning and starvation, and only Captain James Lancaster and 12 of his men made it home, without ships or profit. In 1595 Captain Benjamin Wood tried his luck; all three of his ships, the *Bear*, the *Bear's Whelp* and the *Benjamin*, were lost and not an Englishman survived.

Avarice and adventure proved stronger than failure. On the last day of the century, a group of London merchants received the Queen's grant to form the Honourable East India Company, and a year and a half later four tall vessels sailed from Torbay for points east. James Lancaster was again Captain, James Davis his Chief Pilot and Ralph Fitch, his estates returned to him, was one of the subscribers. Combining trade and piracy, the fleet co-operated with the Dutch in seizing an immensely valuable Portuguese Indiaman, and then established a small English trading post at Bantam in Java. By September, 1603, Lancaster was home again with all his ships, half his crew alive and a handsome profit for the 24 directors and 218 subscribers of the Company, who had invested £50 apiece in the venture.

Lancaster earned himself a knighthood, but sensibly stayed at home the following year, when the second of the Company's fleets sailed under Captain Henry Middleton. This time the cost was higher – one ship, a larger percentage of the crew dead, and a head-on collision with the Dutch, who were effectively taking over the East Indies and were just as unwilling as the Portuguese to share the spice trade.

To avoid the Dutch the Honourable Directors on their third gamble sent William Keeling to India and the Court of the Mughal Emperor at Agra, in the hope of opening the Indian continent to English trade. Captain Keeling liked to

keep his crew healthy on lime-juice and happy on Shakespeare, and he induced his ragged and illiterate men to memorize *Hamlet* and *Richard II*; when his fleet anchored off the coast of Sierre Leone, the two plays were produced before an audience of enthusiastic if mystified natives. Anglo-Saxon culture had become a commodity for export; England had indeed turned outward!

The confidence in things English that induced Keeling to cram *Hamlet* down the throats of his crew, the sublime arrogance that led Thomas Cavendish to assume that the oceans of the world belonged to his Queen, "the most famous and victorious prince that liveth in the world," now led others to imagine a new England beyond the sea, a plantation complete with women and children to sing the Lord's praises and recite with Hamlet: "There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will."

Of all the maritime powers of the 16th Century only England succeeded in planting living replicas of herself in the wilderness. Castilians by the thousands went forth to conquer, convert, even to marry and settle in the New World, but they carved out a subjugated empire, not a new Spain. Frenchmen crossed the ocean to hunt, trap and negotiate with the Canadian Indians, but they returned to their Gallic paradise as soon as they could. Only the English created a new England, settled not by subjects of the Crown resolved to live beyond the seas but by pioneers and builders in a land of new promise, who soon learned that loyalty belongs "where the heart and blood are given."

The changeover from woollens to men as England's most valuable export did not come easily. In a way, it was a partial confession that the search for Cathay had failed and that Elizabethans would have to look elsewhere for "gold, for praise, for glory." Englishmen had to be taught a new vision, and that was the achievement of three men, Richard Hakluyt, Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh. Never was a triumvirate so incongruous. Hakluyt was a Hertfordshire cleric and scholar whose maritime experience included nothing more exciting than a Channel crossing but whose delight in "cosmographie" was so prodigious that he edited 1,700,000 words' worth of travel stories; Gilbert was a West Country squire who fancied himself the instrument of God's ultimate design on earth; and Raleigh was a brilliant courtier whose rapier tongue gave "the lie" even to the Court which sustained him and whose scornful genius antagonized everyone save the Queen. But the three were alike in their determination to discover a new kind of Cathay – an El Dorado which could be all things to all men, whether they were plunderers or settlers, adventurers or dreamers.

James Lancaster, the solid, reliable commander of the East India Company's 1602 expedition, was knighted on his return and thereafter remained in England as a member of the Board.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, that worthy Devonshire worker in the Lord's vineyard, was the first to be sacrificed to the vision of a new nation. In 1583 he sailed for Newfoundland with five ships and 260 colonists to establish a bridgehead on the other side of the ocean. The entire venture was a study in contrast: detailed, long-range, practical planning versus petty selfishness, maddening overconfidence and fatal irresponsibility. On board were shipwrights and carpenters, blacksmiths and miners. There were toys for the "allurement of the savages," an official historian and even a ship's poet who wrote *The Embarkation Ode*; but half the crew were ex-Channel pirates and, to make matters worse, not a woman sailed with the fleet.

Two days out the trouble began; the best ship of the flotilla deserted and beat back to home. Then the crew of the *Swallow* locked their Captain in his cabin and indulged in a week of pirating among the barks and fishing skiffs off the Grand Banks. After seven weeks the fleet reached St. John's, where 36 fishing

vessels of various nationalities were drying their catch. Sir Humphrey immediately declared himself Governor and took possession of the whole island in the name of the Queen. His authority, alas, extended no further than his voice, and despite a splendid proclamation announcing that all religious services were to be Church of England, that English justice would henceforth prevail and that anyone dishonouring Elizabeth's name would lose his ears, the colony distintegrated the moment Englishmen set foot ashore. They mutinied, they stole, they deserted and they demanded to be sent home when it became clear that there was cod aplenty but no gold – or any other precious metal – to be found.

Sir Humphrey, however, would not give up. He sent the sick, the mutinous and the disenchanted home on the *Swallow* and headed his three remaining ships toward Nova Scotia in search of new lands and a more permanent abode. Off Cape Race the ultimate disaster occurred. The *Delight* was driven ashore and 100 colonists with all the fleet's provisions were lost. God's hand was evident, and there was nothing left except to creep home, the expedition a total failure and Sir Humphrey close to bankruptcy.

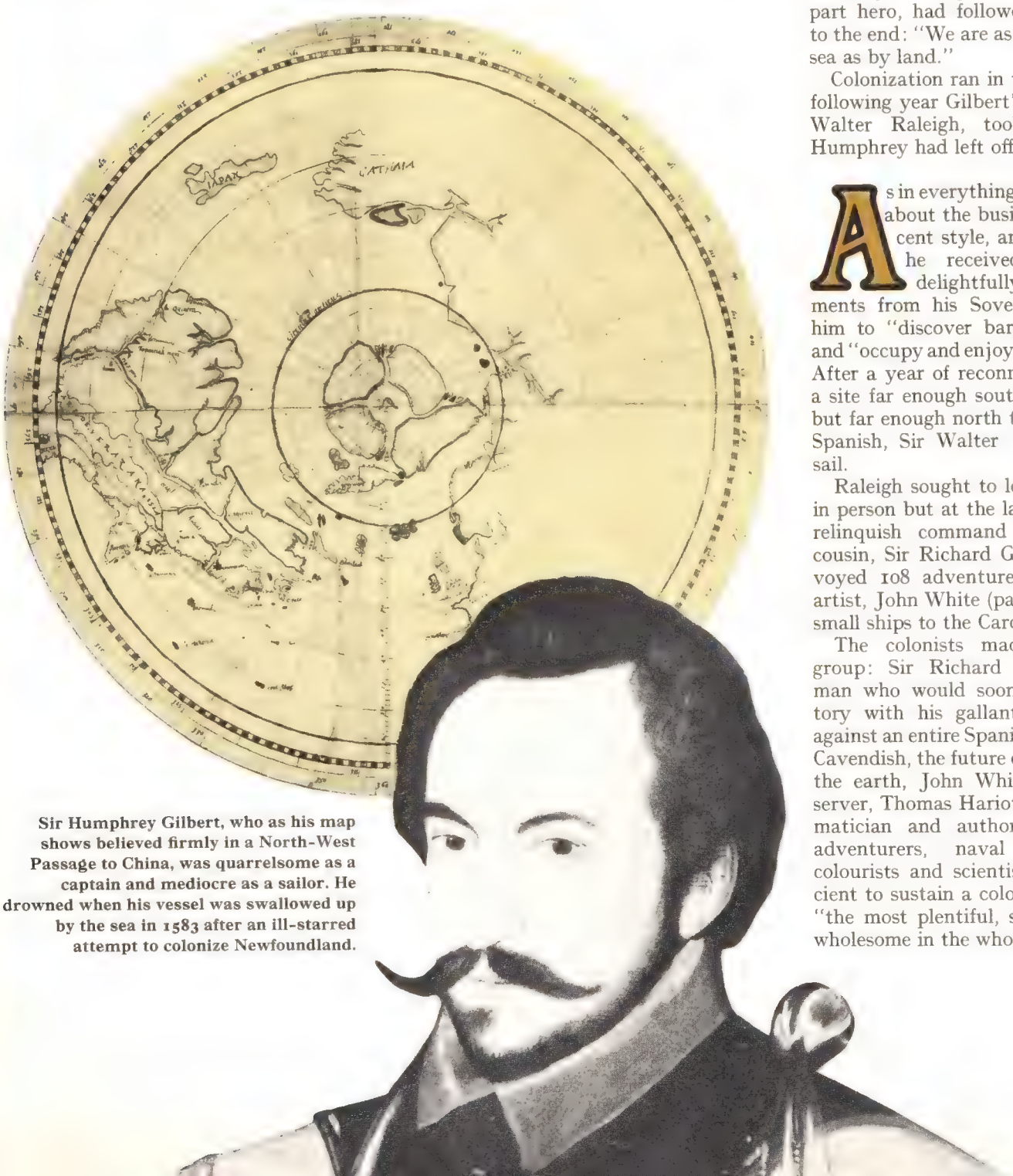
From the start Gilbert had proved an impossible commander – mulish, impetuous and complacently self-confident – but those very qualities now transformed ignominious failure into immortal legend. Disdaining to leave the overcrowded and cramped ten-ton *Squirrel* for the larger and safer *Golden Hind*, Sir Humphrey deliberately courted disaster, preferring "the wind of a vain report to the weight of his own life." Nemesis overtook him on the night of September 9 when the *Squirrel* was "devoured and swallowed up in the sea." That extraordinary man, part fool, part fanatic, part hero, had followed his own words to the end: "We are as near to heaven by sea as by land."

Colonization ran in the blood, and the following year Gilbert's half-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh, took up where Sir Humphrey had left off.

As in everything he did, Raleigh set about the business with magnificent style, and in March, 1584, he received one of those delightfully optimistic documents from his Sovereign empowering him to "discover barbarous countries" and "occupy and enjoy the same forever." After a year of reconnaissance to locate a site far enough south to be temperate but far enough north to be safe from the Spanish, Sir Walter was ready to set sail.

Raleigh sought to lead the expedition in person but at the last moment had to relinquish command to his daredevil cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, who convoyed 108 adventurers – including an artist, John White (pages 48–53) – in ten small ships to the Carolina coast.

The colonists made an impressive group: Sir Richard himself, the seaman who would soon make naval history with his gallant single-ship fight against an entire Spanish flotilla; Thomas Cavendish, the future circumnavigator of the earth, John White, artist and observer, Thomas Hariot, botanist, mathematician and author. But gentlemen adventurers, naval heroes, watercolourists and scientists were not sufficient to sustain a colony, even in a land "the most plentiful, sweet, fruitful and wholesome in the whole world."



Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who as his map shows believed firmly in a North-West Passage to China, was quarrelsome as a captain and mediocre as a sailor. He drowned when his vessel was swallowed up by the sea in 1583 after an ill-starred attempt to colonize Newfoundland.

CHILDREN OF PARADISE

The coastal Indians who watched the first European settlers land on the American mainland in July, 1585, lived simple, exuberant lives in a corner of paradise. Clear skies and fertile soils kept them well supplied with maize which they boiled and ate from large platters (above), sometimes with the addition of beans, pumpkins and fish. At first the Indians were hospitality itself, and the settlers – in particular John White, Official Artist and Governor of later American settlements – gained a thorough knowledge of Indian ways. In the month before the move to Roanoke Island, White stayed in one of the villages, Secoton (right), recording its everyday life.

Secoton's neat fields and houses reveale
a self-sufficient little community

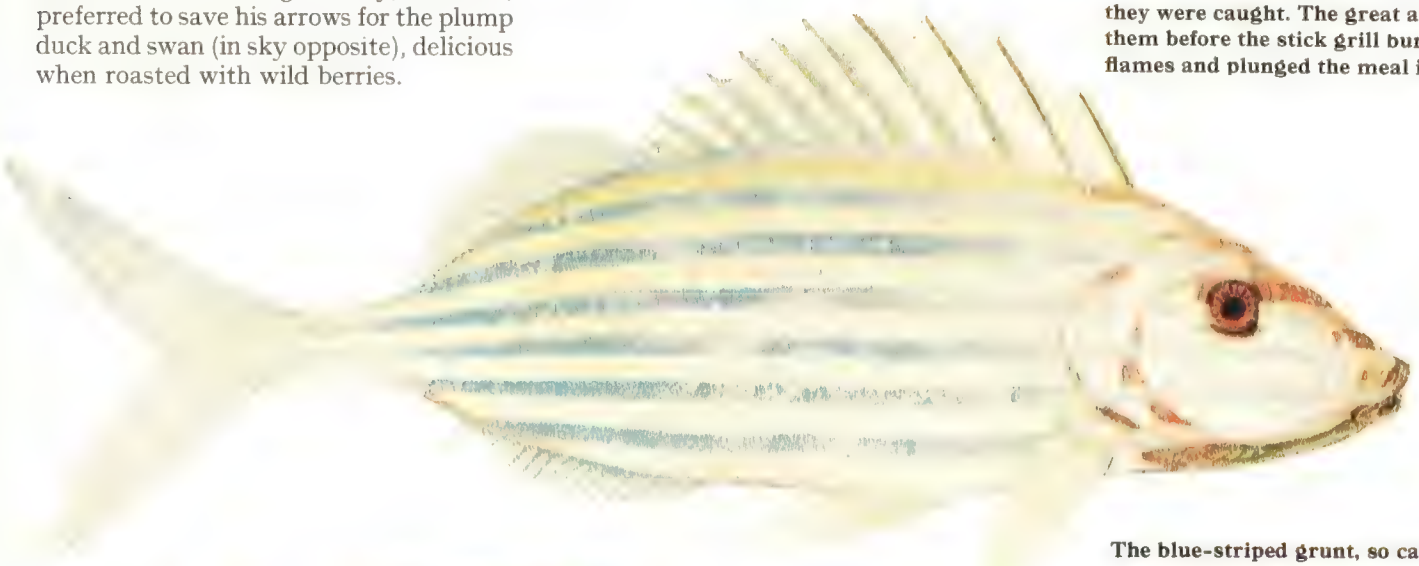
Their greene corne
SEGOTON

The Harvest of the Sea

The warm seas off Roanoke Island teemed with all manner of fish. In the spring, when the herring and sturgeon began to run, the Indians took to the water to hurl multi-pronged spears into the flashing shoals and to drive the fish towards the traps and reed weirs that criss-crossed the inshore shallows.

The sea's bounty did not stop at fish. Whenever the tide went out oysters, mussels and clams could be scooped up from the sand. And if they tired of seafood, the Indians could always slip into the forest to pick fruits and nuts or hunt birds, such as the exotic hoopoe (below). A warrior with a large family, however, preferred to save his arrows for the plump duck and swan (in sky opposite), delicious when roasted with wild berries.

Herring were often barbecued as soon as they were caught. The great art was to cool them before the stick grill burst into flames and plunged the meal into the fire.



The blue-striped grunt, so called after the noise it makes when caught, was one of the Indians' most nourishing sources of food.

Tortoises, baked in their shells over hot embers, were regarded as a great delicacy.

The hoopoe was one of a myriad of brightly coloured birds that flitted through the Indians' leafy domain. About the size of a thrush, its feathers were prized by warriors.

With a canoe full of herring, Indians pull for home after a successful night's fishing. The fire amidships has been used to light their work and to attract fish to the surface.

A Frenzied Ritual Dance

The rites of the Roanoke Indians were almost certainly linked to the yearly cycle of planting, fishing, reaping and hunting. Like many primitive people who translate the rhythm of nature into their own lives, they appear to have marked a girl's attainment of puberty by whirling into frenetic dances round a ring of strangely carved posts (right) – an intimate ritual and one of considerable social significance to the Indians. That White was allowed to record the event reveals how ready the Indians were at first to accept the white settlers.

Roanoke's scientist, Thomas Hariot, described how "three of the fayrest virgins" clung round a central post during the dance, while visiting tribesmen looked on, "every man attyred in the most strange fashion they can devise havinge certayne marks on the backs to declare of what place they bee." He described the dance area as a "broad playne," round which are set up "posts carved with heads like to the faces of Nonnes covered with theyr vayls."

White's own view of the dance reveals an aggressive vigour which the Englishmen, soon coming to expect help as if by natural right, failed to respect – and which was within the year to reduce the settlers to a small, frightened band, only too happy to flee for home as soon as they had the opportunity.

The frenzied dancers would leave the circle as they tired, then re-enter until the end of the ceremony when, as cartographer and mathematician Thomas Hariot discreetly put it, "they go to make merrye."

III. The Birth of Greater Britain

Grenville's expedition to America suffered from all the failings that had plagued Gilbert – opportunism, lack of discipline and light-hearted disregard for the realities of successful colonization.

They were at first "well entertayned by the Savages," but shortly after their arrival Grenville committed an act of folly which shattered the friendly relations with the Indians. A silver cup had disappeared. Grenville assumed it had been stolen by the Indians and laid waste one of their villages. Soon afterwards, he sailed for home, promising to return with a new batch of recruits.

The settlers were left on their own. Shortage of food, the prospect of back-breaking labour and fear of the Indians reduced the tiny social organism to a mob of hysterical men. They never seemed able to feed themselves properly, and their initial good reception led them to place far too much reliance on continuing Indian goodwill. Disillusion on both sides led to increasing bitterness and finally to a pre-emptive British attack on an Indian village. Had war continued, the British would have had no hope, but providentially, a week after the attack, a sail was sighted. It was not the return of Grenville – he had delayed to do a little buccaneering on the way – but a chance visit by Drake, who offered the settlers passage back to the Old World. All but 15 of them bolted for home.

Sir Walter had lost a fortune, but he and Grenville had received a valuable warning: the launching of a living organism takes more than promotional literature and the dream of Empire; it involves money, organization and, above all, men and women with the conviction and staying power to work the rich soil and create a new way of life 3,000 miles from home. Recruiting was all important, and on his second attempt Raleigh offered 150 pioneers 500 acres apiece and a voice in their own government if they dared leave the safety of their firesides and establish a settlement in the New World. The colonists, under the governorship of John White, arrived at Roanoke Island in July, 1587, and found nothing except the bones of one of the 15 volunteers left behind after the flight of the first settlers. Nevertheless, the pioneers elected to make their new home on the ruins of the abandoned old one.

In a visionary impression of El Dorado or "Manoa," the mythical city of gold sought by Sir Walter Raleigh in South America, Indians carry canoes from a river to a near-by lake.

The decision was fatal, for the Indians had neither forgiven nor forgotten the brutality and high-handedness of the earlier colonists. Three weeks after the settlers' arrival, Indians surprised and killed one of the men who was fishing for two miles away from the village. White tried to arrange a meeting with the Indians to patch up their differences. The Indians did not arrive. His patience at an end, White assaulted an Indian village.

For a brief moment it looked as if the colony might survive – a child was born to Eleanor and Ananias Dare – but soon nerves began to falter, and the settlers insisted that John White return to England with a frantic appeal for more spades, more axes, more seeds and more of the necessities of civilization which might save them from extinction.

Four years passed before White again set foot on Roanoke Island. He returned on August 18, 1591, after dark. "We let fall our Grapnel neere the shore, & sounded with a trumpet a Call, & afterwardes many familiar English tunes of Songs, and called to them friendly; but had no answere." There never was an answer. Every last soul had vanished in one of history's greatest mysteries.

There had been a prearranged signal in case of danger. A Maltese cross was to be cut in the wood of the stockade and a sign carved to indicate what had happened. No cross was ever discovered, but on a tree was carved the enigmatic message, "CRO." "in fine Romane letters." Inland, White and his men found the overgrown ruins of the settlers' fort and houses. On a post by the entrance to the village was carved the word "Croatoan." On the shore, they found five chests, previously buried by the settlers, now dug up and broken open. Three were White's: his books had been torn apart and his armour was rusted through.

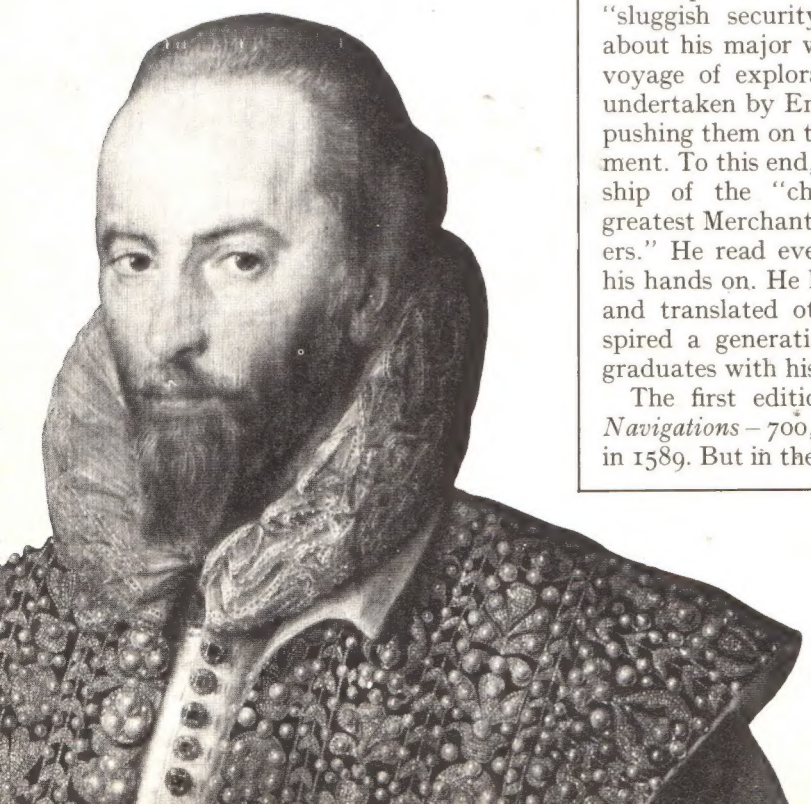
Had the settlers gone to live with the Croatoan Indians, had they been massacred by them, or had something else happened? All that survived of the lost colony was the legend of a breed of white-faced, blue-eyed Indians somewhere in the interior.

The Roanoke settlement may have been martyred to the savagery of a new continent but it was also one of the first

victims of the Armada, for when John White sailed back to England in 1587 he found the kingdom on the verge of war with Spain. Raleigh had already invested £40,000 and it took months to find new capital and supplies. Then, just as Grenville succeeded in gathering together a relief party, news of the Armada's sailing arrived, and all Her Majesty's vessels were commandeered for the defence of the realm.

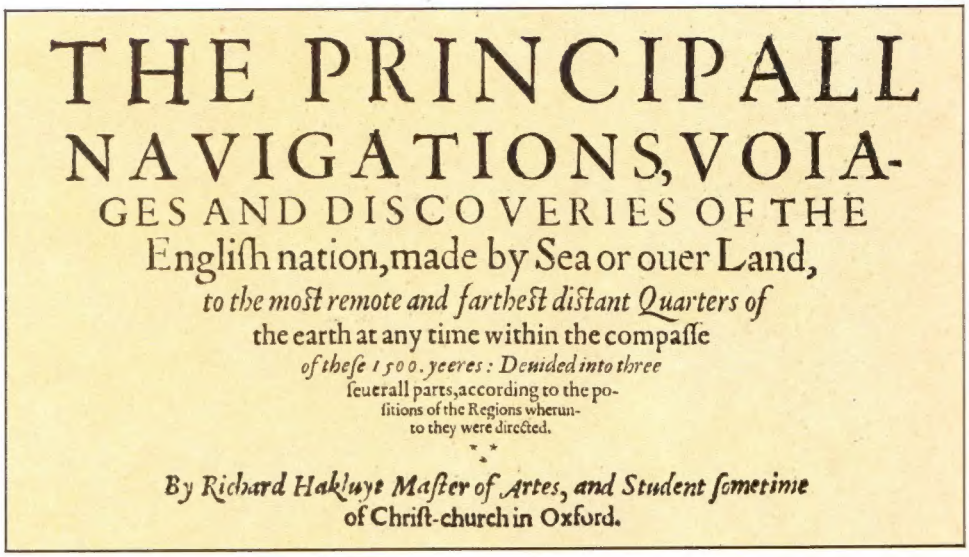
Consequently the 89 men, 17 women and 11 children of the Roanoke settlement may have been sacrificed, but two more essential lessons had been learned. First, colonization was too expensive for a single patron; it needed the same kind of group financing and unofficial state support given the Muscovy Company and the East India Company. Second, El Dorado was a figment. There was no way to a quick profit, only backbreaking investment in a new nation; as Francis Bacon said, the founding of colonies was like the planting of trees: "you must make account to lose almost twenty years' profit, and expect your recompense in the end."

Raleigh appreciated the lesson; he was too good a businessman and engineer not to, but he was also a poet and a dreamer, and he could not forget the vision of a haven, devoid of human toil and suffering. For a few an imaginary Cathay was always just round the corner waiting to be discovered, and early in 1595 Sir



Sir Walter Raleigh, old at 43 and in no physical condition to venture into steaming tropical jungles, brought no gold back from South America in 1595 – only memories of a strange and fascinating land "that hath yet her maidenhead."

Richard Hakluyt, Apostle of Empire



THE PRINCIPALL
NAVIGATIONS, VOIA-
GES AND DISCOVERIES OF THE
Engliſh nation, made by Sea or ouer Land,
to the moſt remote and farthеſt diſtant Quarters of
the earth at any time within the compaſſe
of theſe 1500. yeeres: Deuided into three
ſeuerall parts, according to the po-
ſitions of the Regions wherun-
to they were directed.

By Richard Hakluyt Maſter of Artes, and Student ſometime
of Chriſt-church in Oxford.

Richard Hakluyt was the most influential of the select band of literary Elizabethans who – like Gilbert, Davis, Dee and Raleigh – publicized their vision of a greater England beyond the seas. Inspired as a schoolboy by his geographically minded cousin–also named Richard Hakluyt – he dedicated his life to recording voyages and exhorting his countrymen to enterprise overseas.

First, with a prophetic enthusiasm for the future direction of imperial expansion, he propagandized for colonization in North America.

Then, while acting as Chaplain to the English Embassy in Paris in 1583, he learned that the English were held in contempt on the Continent for their "sluggish security." Incensed, he set about his major work: to record every voyage of exploration and settlement undertaken by Englishmen as a way of pushing them on to yet greater achievement. To this end, he sought the friendship of the "chiefest Captains, the greatest Merchants, and the best Mariners." He read everything he could lay his hands on. He had works translated, and translated others himself. He inspired a generation of Oxford undergraduates with his brilliant lectures.

The first edition of *The Principall Navigations* – 700,000 words – appeared in 1589. But in the next decade, English explorers proved so ambitious that the work was soon out of date. Nothing daunted the indefatigable author set about adding another million words, and the second edition appeared at the end of the century.

It remains a unique work, a combination of pithy narrative, history, diplomacy and economics, welded together by a towering historical vision and unrivalled accuracy into "the prose epic of the modern English nation."

To Hakluyt, we owe practically everything we know about many English voyages – the travels of Newberry and Fitch in Asia, of Lancaster in the East Indies, of Raleigh to Virginia and South America. He records delightful human touches, like the "Morris dancers, Hobby horse and Manylike conceits" taken by Gilbert on his last voyage "to delight the Savage people."

His arguments, too, were persuasive to Elizabethan readers: colonies, he said, would "vent" England's excess population, especially the unemployed and criminals; they would be sources of untold wealth; they would be strategically vital in struggles with other powers.

His was a heroic, optimistic vision – yet over the next three centuries his dreams were more than fulfilled and his work remained the epic inspiration which he had intended.

Walter sailed forth to seek his paradise in the inaccessible reaches of the South American Orinoco River where not even a Spaniard had ever been.

With 100 men he began the long ordeal of rowing up the Orinoco. He was forced "to lie in the rain and weather, in the open air, in the burning sun, and upon the hard boards," and conditions became so foul that "there was never any prison in England that could be found more unsavoury and loathsome." At 43, the gallant Captain longed for the comforts of a feather-bed and a decently cooked meal, but his vision dispelled yearnings for dry bedclothes and good food. He continued on into the labyrinth of tributaries that formed the Orinoco. Raleigh found no golden cities, but he saw wonders that inspired him, and made him all the more willing to believe the fairy-tales told by the Indians. Three hundred miles inland he encountered "the most beautiful country that ever mine eyes beheld," a land rich in game and the fullness of the earth, where every pebble seemed to hold the promise of a fortune. Only the ugly crocodiles that swam in the wake of his ship, and to which one of his company fell victim, marred what seemed demi-paradise.

From the Indians Raleigh learned of wonders even more marvellous: of oysters that grew on trees; of kings who clothed themselves in gold-dust; of giant men called "Ewaipanoma" with mouths in their chests and eyes in their shoulders; and of Amazons who on the 12th month of each year invited the lustiest warriors of neighbouring tribes to stand on the borders of their territories while the damsels "cast lots for their valentines." The ladies enjoyed their men until the moon signified the end of a month of feasting and love-making. No wonder Guiana always remained for Raleigh "a country that hath yet her maidenhead."

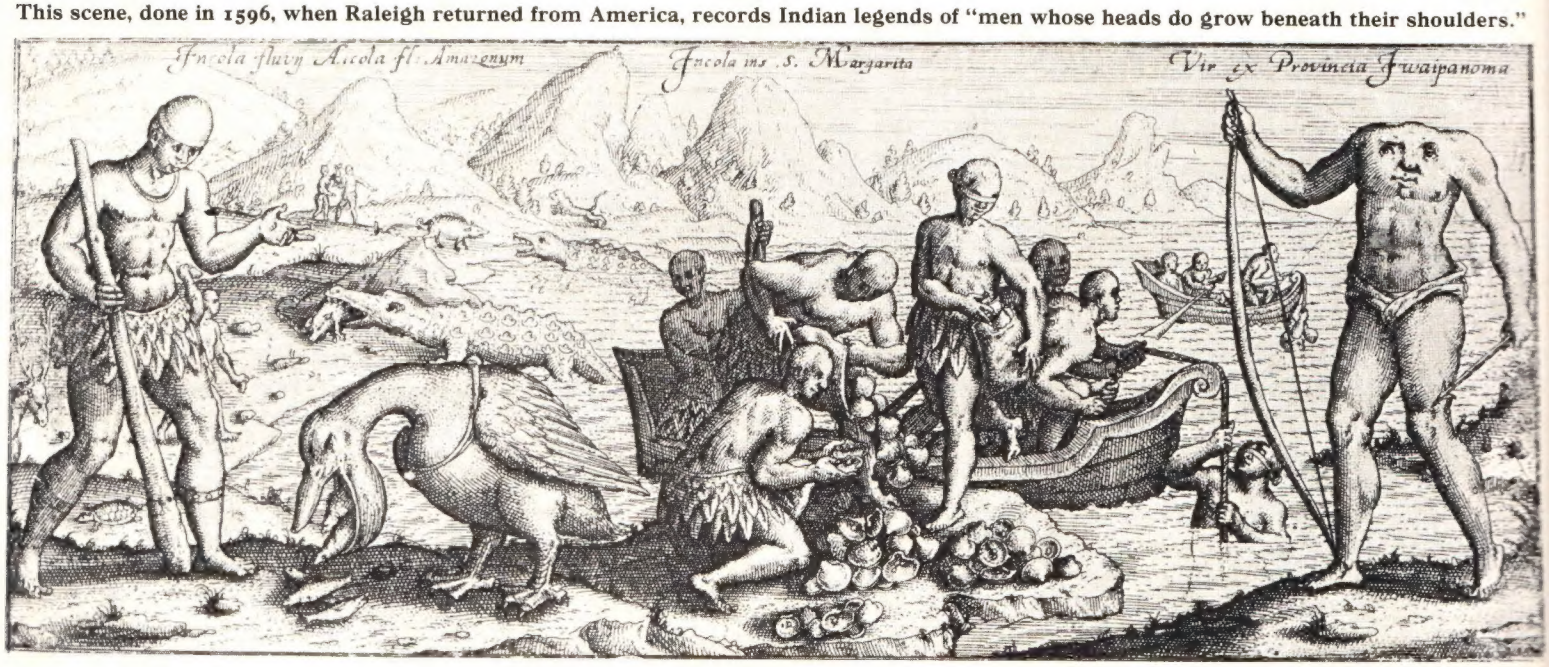
The rainy season came, and Sir Walter's little band decided that they had had enough of hard boards and unsavoury victuals. They returned to the ships in the estuary and sailed back to England with no gold in their pockets but with visions of paradise in their heads.

It was this myth, this image of "a shelter and a hiding place" in the New World, whether in Massachusetts or Virginia, Newfoundland or Guinea, that kept Englishmen coming; and eventually they succeeded in planting a new nation beyond the sea.

Gilbert gave his life and Raleigh his fortune and creative imagination to the New World; Richard Hakluyt gave it his pen and produced "the prose epic of the modern English nation." As a young Queen's Scholar at Westminster, Hakluyt had been enthralled by maps and tales of oceanic travel, and as a clergyman he became obsessed with an almost divine calling – the duty to tell Elizabethans that the seas were open to all men of courage, that Cathay was within reach and that North America must be planted with Englishmen. He trained himself in mathematics and geography and mastered a half-dozen languages so that not a single discovery or act of heroism might escape his eye, and the magic of his descriptions transmuted the grim, sordid tales of freezing and cannibalism into the pure gold of high adventure. His huge compilation appeared first in 1589, *The Principall Navigations, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation.*

Once started, English expansion could not be stopped, and such was the pace of adventure that within a decade a second edition was needed to record it, a million words heavier than the first. Richard Hakluyt died in 1616; by then a new dynasty sat upon the throne and Elizabeth's sea-dogs were a mere memory, but their epitaph had already been proudly written: Englishmen "through the special assistance and blessing of God, in searching the most opposite corners and quarters of the world, and to speak plainly, in compassing the vast globe of the earth more than once, have excelled all nations and peoples of the earth."

This scene, done in 1596, when Raleigh returned from America, records Indian legends of "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders."



Now own a lasting memento of the great days of Empire!

This splendid Jubilee mug is yours for only 90p and 4 tokens

Imagine the pleasure of adding this classic piece to your collection of precious china. A beautiful reproduction in finest quality Crown Staffordshire bone china, it would sell for at least £1.50 in the shops – if you could buy it. In fact, it's exclusive to readers of *The British Empire*.

The design has been specially commissioned to form a unique and decorative memento of the great imperial celebration that was Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

Approximately half a pint in capacity, and standing 4¾" high, the mug carries a beautifully executed replica of an authentic Jubilee design in black on translucent white bone china. A discreet touch of gold completes the extremely elegant design.

You already have two tokens towards the four required to obtain this masterpiece in miniature, provided you saved the token from last week's issue. (If not, your newsagent should still be able to obtain a copy of part one for you.) The two remaining tokens you'll want to watch out for will appear in the next two weeks' issues of *The British Empire*. To make sure of getting them why not place a regular order with your newsagent now?

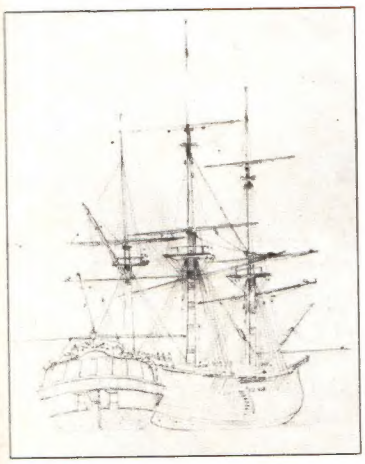
N.B. Your application must be received no later than March 31st, 1972.

FREE! Fascinating Campaign Map in next week's issue.

Full colour map details every important battle in Empire history – from 1758 to 1956. Also illustrates the handsome medals awarded for each campaign. Absorbingly interesting – you'll pore over this for hours! And you'll find it a great help in following the events to be chronicled in later issues of *The British Empire*. Size 16" x 21½" – makes a superb wall decoration.

£3,000 Empire Holiday Competition. Enter now!

Win or lose, you'll get this exclusive print-FREE!



Just post this coupon, together with two blue tokens (one from this week's issue, the other from part one published last week) and we'll send your free competition entry form – together with a free exclusive print of HMS *Resolution*!

You stand to win a two-week holiday of your choice in the West Indies, India or East Africa. Fabulous! Five second prizes – VIP long week-ends in Gibraltar for two. Plus 1,000 consolation prizes of valuable Time-Life books. Why wait – send off the coupon now.

How the token scheme works.

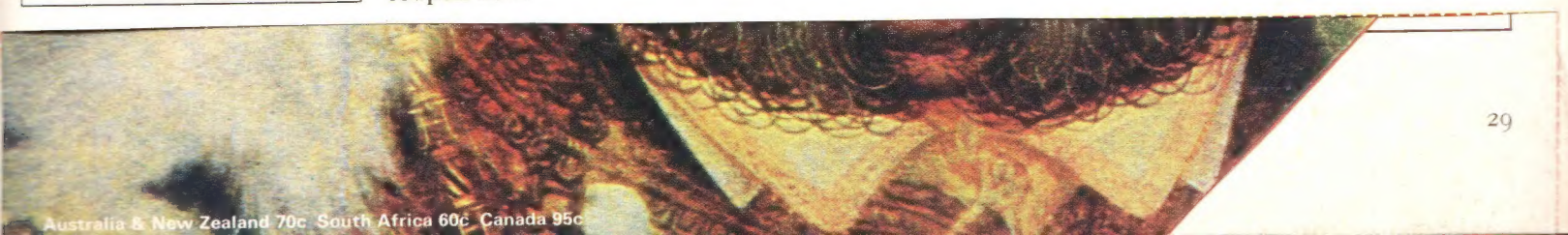
Each week, there are two tokens on the inside front cover of *The British Empire*. This week, there's the second Competition token and the second token towards the Crown Staffordshire Jubilee mug. Each week you should collect these tokens to take advantage of the exciting offers that are on their way. And every week, as you collect towards the current offer, you'll be getting a start towards the next. The chart shows you how it all works.

Issue

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
1	2	COMPETITION TOKENS					
1	2	3	4	JUBILEE MUG TOKENS			
		1	2	3	4		
				1	2	3	4

All offers and competitions applicable to the British Isles only.

N.B. Completed entry forms must be returned no later than March 31st, 1972, so send for yours now.



Australia & New Zealand 70c South Africa 60c Canada 95c

East Yorkshire Regiment 15th Foot. 1832